

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 4, 11, and 14.

Please amend claims 1, 2, 9, and 15 and add claims 25-28 as follows:

1. (Twice amended) An isolated double-stranded nucleic acid molecule comprising a *FIE* polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO:4, wherein the polypeptide comprises a WD40 repeat and wherein the nucleic acid molecule enhances endosperm development in the absence of fertilization when the polynucleotide is operably linked to promoter to inhibit gene expression and introduced into a plant.

2. (Twice amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the *FIE* polynucleotide is at least about 100 nucleotides in length.

9. (Twice amended) A transgenic plant comprising an expression cassette containing a plant promoter operably linked to the *FIE* polynucleotide of claim 1, wherein the polynucleotide is heterologous to the plant promoter or the plant.

15. (Twice amended) A method of modulating endosperm development in a plant, the method comprising introducing into the plant an expression cassette containing a plant promoter operably linked to the *FIE* polynucleotide of claim 1, wherein the polynucleotide is heterologous to the plant promoter or the plant, and wherein introduction of the expression cassette into the plant inhibits gene expression.

25. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the polynucleotide is at least 100 nucleotides in length.

26. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the plant promoter is tissue-specific.

27. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the plant promoter is ovule- or embryo-specific.

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